

WALLINGTON,
December 12,
1906.

I was unusually glad to get your letter, for I seemed to detect in it the note of out-doors zest and freshness which betokened that you had what to you, at any rate, was something of a holiday. It interested me extremely to read your impressions of the Isthmus; and one felt proud of what man can do to make this world more habitable when one compared your account of the health of the employees, and their families, with the story of Darien which Macaulay tells with such extraordinary picturesqueness in the XXIVth chapter of his History. Spain is not so formidable to you as she was to those poor souls of Scotch settlers in 1699; and *you* have had a hand in bringing that result about. Captain Younghusband's description of your army in the Philippines is curious. I fancy that must have been very much the appearance of the legionary in remote quarters under the Eoman Empire. But it pleased me most to know that you had dined at the petty officers' mess on the *Louisiana*. I should like to have seen the faces around the Board of Admiralty if, as a junior Lord, in the year 1869, I had accepted the hospitality of the Warrant officers! They must be a fine set with you, as with us; and I am glad to think that they live exceedingly well.

I am leading a very tranquil life, finishing my next part of the American Eevolution. It is most fascinating work describing the French element in the great affair. The

statesmen at Versailles are in interesting contrast to Nathanael Greene and Jonathan Trumbull. Those ancient heroes do not lose by the comparison.

Almost our last visitors here were Charles Francis and Mrs. Adams. He went on to inspect Flodden, as he is very fond of battle-fields. He has seen some warm work in his time, or omitted to see it; for he slept all through Pickett's charge with his tired cavalry in the rear of the line. I am glad to say he is older than I am. Very few of my contemporaries are still going; except Bryce, and John Morley, and the Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman